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ABSTRACT

Case studies of high student achievement levels and school effectiveness from three rural Alaska Native schools, all offering some bilingual or bicultural classes, examine curriculum and school instructional practices, school social systems, student outcomes, aspects of school governance, and school-community relations. Chaputnguak High School, in the Yupik Eskimo village of Chefornak, enrolls 29 students in individualized, self-paced mastery programs and has the region's highest graduation requirements; school-community relations are excellent, students have positive attitudes and a sense of "ownership," and one-third to one-half of seniors enter college. Metlakatla elementary/secondary school, in a Tsimshian Indian village, has a history of local control and emphasizes teaching basics; student academic achievement, measured on standardized tests, is very good compared to other rural small schools in Alaska, but some questions exist about school effectiveness in meeting community needs. The 22 students (K-8) who attend Tanacross school are largely Athabaskan Indians; the school exists because parents felt their children were not well served by being bused to school in another community, and took legal action to have their own school, which opened in 1980; school staff is exceptional, parents are satisfied, and student attitudes and test scores are excellent. (MH)

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ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS:

THREE CASE STUDIES

A Report to the

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

By

Gerald A. McBeath, Bill McDiarmid, and Carl E., Shepro

with Judith Kleinfeld and E. Dean Coon

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
A LOOK AT CHAPUTNGUAK HIGH SCHOOL, by Bill McDiarmid	
Introduction.....	2
Methodology.....	3
Limitations.....	3
Organization of the Paper.....	3
Description of the Program.....	4
Goals.....	4
Curriculum.....	4
Use of Aides.....	5
Native Culture.....	6
School Climate.....	6
Key Actors: The Advisory School Board and the Principal.....	7
Conclusion.....	8
THE METLAKATLA SCHOOLS, by Carl E. Shepro	
Introduction.....	10
Methods.....	10
The Setting.....	11
School History.....	12
Curriculum.....	13
Social Climate.....	14
Student Outcomes.....	15
School Actors and Local Control.....	16
Conclusions.....	18
THE TANACROSS CASE, by Gerald A. McBeath	
Overview.....	20
Methods.....	20
The Setting.....	21
School History.....	21
Curriculum.....	23
Social Climate.....	24
Student Outcomes.....	25
School Actors and Local Control.....	26
Conclusions.....	28
COMPARISON OF CASES	
School Instructional Practices and Policies.....	29
School Social System.....	30
School-Community Relations.....	31
APPENDIX A: CHAPUTNGUAK HIGH SCHOOL	
Philosophy.....	33
Goals.....	33
Course Descriptions.....	34
APPENDIX B: TANACROSS SCHOOL	
Student Handbook.....	38

INTRODUCTION

Our charge was to study briefly three rural schools with high student achievement rates and to describe the factors which seemed to be associated with those results.

Two school districts responded to the Department of Education's (DOE) request for information on high achieving Native schools--Lower Kuskokwim School District and the Annette Island School District. We made site visits to the Chefornak high school and the Metlakatla schools in these districts. The third site visit was to the Tanacross school in the Alaska Gateway District.

None of the three schools was randomly selected, and in no sense can they be said to represent scientifically the class of effective schools in Alaska. Nevertheless, the schools are sufficiently different from one another--in terms of region of the state, size of the community, level of acculturation of community residents, economic and political conditions of the community--that reporting on them may capture the variation of methods and approaches associated with high achievement levels elsewhere in rural Alaska.

In the site visits, we used research instruments developed for our state-wide study of localized schooling. They were not designed with DOE's current investigation of school effectiveness in mind, and they are weighted toward the area of school-community relations. Nonetheless, the instruments did enable us to touch on many of the practices considered important in the national studies of effective schooling.

Because the three school systems we looked at were presumptively effective, based on 1981 test data, our approach has been to explore the range of factors and conditions which seemed to be strongly associated with the high achievement levels. We looked at curriculum and school instructional practices, the school social system, student outcomes, and some aspects of the governance of the school. The three case studies describe what we found, and the concluding section compares the schools.

A LOOK AT CHAPUTNGUAK HIGH SCHOOL

Bill McDiarmid

INTRODUCTION

Currently, attention throughout Alaska is focused on effective schooling practices. Educators are particularly interested in teaching and administrative practices which have proved effective in small rural high schools. The Department of Education, consequently, asked rural administrators to nominate schools whose test scores indicated that they were doing an unusually effective job in educating rural youth. Researchers involved in the "Decentralized Education in Rural Alaska" study were asked to visit these school sites and report on their programs.

One of the schools nominated was Chaputnguak High School in Chefnak. This nomination was based on standardized test scores from the Spring of 1981. Test results from the spring of 1982 fell, however, to near the average for the Lower Kuskokwim School District. Research using achievement test results as the major criterion for effectiveness generally relies on test results over a five year period. Results from two years' of testing simply do not provide sufficient data for measuring effectiveness.

There are, however, a number of other measures of school effectiveness in addition to achievement test scores. During our fieldwork in Chefnak, we gathered data on attendance and dropout rates, incidents of behavioral problems and vandalism, college entrance, school climate, and community satisfaction. On the basis of this data there was sufficient evidence of effectiveness to warrant attention to the academic program and school-community relations.

Attendance for 1981-82 was nearly 95 percent. Since the high school program began in 1977, there have been no dropouts. Behavioral problems have been very minor; the local advisory school board (ASB)--the final local arbitrator in disciplinary matters--has not dealt with a single disciplinary case in five years. No incidents of vandalism have occurred at the school; indeed, the buildings and equipment are in excellent physical condition. From last year's Senior Class, three of nine graduates entered college; this year, two of the four graduating seniors are planning to enter college in the fall. Although graduation requirements are the highest in the region, seniors graduate on schedule. In short, there are clear indications that the school is effective.

Chefnak is fairly typical of Native villages in the southwestern region--and throughout the state. Per capita cash income is very low; housing is substandard, lacking both water and plumbing; the general level of education is low with a majority of residents over 40 years of age non-English speakers; unemployment is high and opportunities for economic development extremely limited. Located on the Ooksokak River a few miles inland from the Bering Sea, Chefnak is the home of some 230 Yupik Eskimo people who still pursue a largely traditional life-style. Catholicism is the religion of the village. In

addition to the high school which was built in 1977, there is a BIA elementary school with an enrollment of 64. In short, there is little in the socio-economic characteristics of the village that would distinguish it from other communities in the region.

Chaputnguak High School enrolls 29 students in grades 9 through 12. There is a principal-teacher, one full time teacher and one half-time teacher. There are four aides, one of whom works exclusively with students in the shop. The school also employs a cook, a janitor, and a maintenance person. The physical plant itself is new and in good condition. It contains one large, multi-grade classroom, a small gym, a shop, and an office for the principal.

The focus of this paper is on those elements of the academic program and the characteristics of the relationship between the educational professionals and the local school board which contribute to the effectiveness of the school. While these aspects of the educational process are not unique to Chefnak, the combination of an effective academic program and school-village cooperation and trust is unusual.

Methodology

The data used in the paper were gathered during a week-long visit to the school in April 1982. The author conducted intensive, semi-structured interviews with the school personnel and with the board members in the village at that time. In addition, several community leaders and parents were asked to complete a questionnaire on the school program, the principal, the local school board, the district school board, and the superintendent. Finally, the author observed classes, reviewed curricular materials, and talked informally with students and others in the community.

Limitations

Perhaps the most severe limitation of this paper is the very brief period of observation in the school. One week is hardly enough time to understand fully the workings of any school. Secondly, it was impossible to survey all community members as to their attitudes about the school. We did manage to survey 30 percent of the parents of high school students but this does not represent a random sample. Access to community members was further limited by language problems. For some interviews, a translator was necessary. As a translator was not always available, however, a number of parents and other community members could not be interviewed. Finally, the fieldwork took place during seal hunting season. As a consequence, a number of male villagers were out of the community and thus unavailable to the author.

Organization of the Paper

In the first section of this paper, we will describe the academic program at Chaputnguak High School. We turn, in the second section, to the relative involvement and the attitudes of key actors: local school board members, community members, and school personnel. Finally, we speculate--in the third section--on why the school has been successful.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

Goals

The academic program of Chaputnguak High School is set up to meet the goals set forth by the local advisory school board:

Chaputnguak High School shall adequately prepare every student for success in college and university programs including those in the fields of science and technology. In doing so, every student shall be adequately prepared to meet the village needs in terms of adequately trained personnel to meet both domestic and employment needs.

At the same time, the board recognizes the importance of preparing students for life in the village and instilling the values esteemed by the people of Chefnak:

The subject matter shall be taught in a way that it gives the students the best preparation for daily living in the village, solving village problems and for meeting the needs of the village in terms of adequately trained personnel...the high school shall assure that each student develops and maintains top quality working habits, respect for the villagers, a dedication to community service, respect for the community religion, and shall be dedicated to long range improvement of himself or herself and the village.

On these goals, there seems to be agreement between the local school board and the principal. He describes his program as follows:

We want students to leave confident that they have a high school education. They should not feel inferior because they came out of a bush high school. They will be on the same standard as high school students anywhere.

Curriculum

To meet these goals, all students are on individualized, mastery-based programs. Individualized in Chefnak means that the students move at their own pace. There are not a plethora of courses offered; rather, there are 18 required courses that the student must master in order to graduate (for a full description of these courses, see Appendix A). Required courses include Algebra I and II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Government, U.S. and World Histories, Geography, Native Culture, English, Typing, Record Keeping, Physical Education, Math Mastery, Reading Mastery, and Science Mastery. These last three are non-credit courses which cover the fundamental principles and skills in each subject area.

Requiring students to master these basic skills at the same time they are studying higher level material in the core subjects is unique in the author's experience in rural Alaska. The typical approach is to hammer away at fundamental computational skills, for example, before allowing the student to advance to Algebra. The efficacy of this approach is apparent in the fact that students do complete the Math Mastery course as well as Algebra and Geometry

before they graduate. The Mastery Reading course requires students to read and comprehend material from a variety of sources, including Time and Newsweek magazines, newspapers, encyclopedias, directions, and catalogs. Students answer brief comprehension questions using new vocabulary words.

In many schools, vocational education courses are peopled by students who, for whatever reason, cannot perform up to standard in academic courses. In Chefnak, subjects required for graduation are the first priority for all students. Once a student has passed these, then he is eligible for vocational education courses--"You've got to be an outstanding student to get into the vocational education courses." Students are allowed to work in the shop--after school hours. They do not, however, receive credit for such after-hours work.

Management of this approach seems to be its most problematic aspect. Eighty percent accuracy on the unit test is required for mastery in the core curriculum; in the mastery courses, 100 percent accuracy is the standard. Students who fail to achieve these levels must repeat the unit until they reach mastery level. The teachers must keep up-to-date records on 29 students, all of whom are moving at their own pace. As one of the teachers remarked, "It appears chaotic but it does come together. Coordination and planning is ongoing."

While the core courses use fairly standard high school texts--supplemented by teacher-prepared worksheets and tests--the mastery courses are entirely teacher-created. This again is very demanding. All of the teachers indicated that they spent a great deal of their time preparing materials and each wished they had more time for this task.

Use of Aides

Another unusual feature of the high school in Chefnak is the way in which local aides are used in the classroom. Three of the aides have worked with the principal since he instituted the curriculum five years ago. Consequently, they are very familiar with the program and with the principal's approach.

While one of the teachers is making a presentation at the front of the classroom, the aides circulate among the students' desks, explaining in Yupik, when necessary, what the teacher is saying. When students are working independently, the aides wander among them, checking their work and offering advice.

The aides are thus not relegated to merely menial tasks such as xeroxing, grading tests, typing, or "setting up" for the teachers. Rather, they are functional elements in the instructional process. As one of the teachers said, "The aides are very valuable--Steven [one of the aides] can answer things about geometry that I don't know."

The students appear to be more comfortable with the aides in certain situations than they are with their teachers. One of the students told the author that he would rather ask an aide for help than a teacher: "He's my uncle so I'm not shy when I don't know something." Students also mentioned that it is easier to ask certain questions in Yupik rather than in English.

Native Culture

Another required course for graduation is Native Culture. One of the bilingual aides is responsible for the Native Culture courses. He arranges for villagers to come up to the high school to teach a variety of courses ranging from Tundra Survival to Mukluk Sewing. In addition, he teaches Yupik language and orthography for one hour each day.

This aspect of the school program is, thus, under the control of the village. The bilingual aide is free to offer whatever courses he sees appropriate and reports directly to the ASB on the program. This is an important element in the community's sense of "ownership" of the school. All of the school board members and parents with whom the author spoke indicated satisfaction with the Native culture and language program at the school--a satisfaction noticeably absent in a number of other villages. At the same time, the ASB sees the primary mission of the school to be "to prepare every student for success in college and university programs."

School Climate

Entering the classroom at Chaputnguak High School, the visitor is struck by the industry of the students. Very little time is lost as students move from one task to another. Our visit took place near the end of the school year; students had obviously been well-socialized into the self-paced individualized system.

The physical arrangement of the school is consistent with the academic program. Each student sits at a metal "secretary" desk which contains a large file drawer and several smaller drawers. The file drawer contains the student's work organized by subject. At all times, the students have materials to work on as well as all their texts and supplies.

Micro-computers are located along the wall beside the students' desks. Typewriters are located at the back of the room as are the library shelves. Current periodicals--including Time, Newsweek, Popular Mechanics, Photography, Sports Illustrated, and probably a dozen others--hang from hooks along the front and back walls of the room. Whenever students have free time--which is rare--they pick up a magazine and read. Sewing machines are also in the back of the room. There are no education kits or gimmicks present--items usually in super abundance in village high schools.

At no time during our visit did we observe students sitting without anything to do. Nor did we observe class being disrupted by extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities, we were told, are precisely that--outside the curriculum. Although students were frantically completing the preparation of their yearbook, no class time was allotted for the task. They worked after school and on weekends.

Throughout the day, music plays on the stereo system. Tapes are classical or light classical. Despite the village penchant for disco, students seemed to enjoy the music. Indeed, students seemed comfortable and completely at ease in an atmosphere that one and the same was serious and relaxed.

Less easy to identify than other measures of school climate, the idea of "ownership" seems important to the positive climate of the Chefnak school. All of the students are capable of operating all the equipment--micro-computers, audio-visual, typewriters, xerox, sewing machines, and the stereo--in the classroom. Students have set up a darkroom in which all students are allowed to work. In the shop, none of the equipment is off-limits provided they have passed a course in shop safety. Free to use whatever equipment is available, moving at their own pace through their courses, expected to organize themselves for their work, the students seem not only equal to these responsibilities but demonstrate an unselfconscious maturity and sense of direction. In the classroom, the observer has the sense that the students "own" this school.

To sum up, the academic program is mastery-based and self-paced, teacher aides are essential to the instructional process, the classroom arrangement and atmosphere are consistent with the demanding curriculum, and students are afforded the opportunity to "own" their classroom.

KEY ACTORS: THE ADVISORY SCHOOL BOARD AND THE PRINCIPAL

A feature of the educational process in Chefnak which is doubtless important--though not unique--is the working relationship between the advisory school board and the high school staff, particularly the principal.

The ASB is composed of five members, all of whom are leaders in the community. Three of the members have been on the board for the full five years that the high school has existed and that the principal has been at the school.

School board members feel very positive about the school and the staff. All four board members we interviewed felt the principal kept them well-informed of what was happening at the school. All felt students were achieving at a high enough level and that the programs in reading and math were good. All praised the Native culture and language courses. The only negative note concerning the academic program was a comment by a board member that he felt the teachers lectured too much.

The key figure in designing and implementing the academic program in Chefnak has been the principal. With 15 years of teaching experience in rural Alaska, the principal has used his knowledge to design a program that he feels will prepare students for university studies. The program emphasizes math and science because the principal feels these are the areas in which Native students are least likely to be handicapped by problems with English--a second language for most of them.

Two of the principal's attitudes seem particularly relevant to effective schooling. The first is his expectation that Native students should be taught and should achieve at the same level as their urban white counterparts. This expectation dictates the curriculum--particularly in the math and science areas. Secondly, the principal operates on the idea that the school belongs to the community.

This attitude ensures that the principal keeps the ASB fully informed of all developments that might affect the school. One of the ASB members--echoing the words of other members--said:

When something comes up, a letter or something, he doesn't do it on his own. He goes around to each board members' house and explain what it is. He goes to the chairman first and the chairman may call a special meeting if he thinks it's necessary. He doesn't just go ahead and do things on his own.

In all areas of decision-making, the principal makes an effort to involve the ASB. He circulates the calendar for comment, allows them to screen and recommend to Lower Kuskokwim School District candidates for classified positions, goes through the budget with them line-item by line-item, ensures that the ASB itself conducts community surveys for the O50 regulations, and leaves the final decisions on community use of the facilities up to the ASB. While some of these procedures are dictated by law, most are at the discretion of the principal. Where the principal can involve the ASB, he does so in Chefnak.

While this fosters a sense of "ownership" in the ASB and other community members, it also creates, at times, conflicts with the district office. The district office naturally considers the principal their employee while the principal views the ASB as the voice of the community and, by extension, policy makers for the school.

In short, the ASB and the principal have developed a very positive working relationship. The ASB looks to the principal as the educational leader in the school. The principal, in turn, looks to the ASB for guidance and direction in developing the academic program and in administering the school. This relationship lends much to the atmosphere of the school. At the same time, however, the relationship has also led to a "we vs. them" feeling towards the district office.

The remaining professional staff at the school--a teaching couple--were new to Chefnak this year. Relations between these teachers and the community appeared excellent. Their input into the academic program was, however, somewhat limited because they were new.

CONCLUSION

Despite the uncertainty surrounding achievement test scores at Chaputnquak High School in Chefnak, several aspects of the academic program and community-school relations impress us as potentially effective.

1. The individualized, mastery approach to core subjects seems an effective method of allowing students in a multi-grade classroom to progress at their own speed while ensuring that material is mastered.
2. Complementing this approach is the use of a mastery program in basic skills--reading comprehension, math computation, and scientific principles--through which students progress concurrently with more advanced work in English, math, and science.

3. Involving bilingual aides as instructors on a one-on-one basis is another effective approach.
4. The use of a bilingual aide as director of the Native cultural and language courses who reports directly to the ASB increases the community's sense of "ownership" of the program and the likelihood that the skills and knowledge taught will be viewed as relevant by students, parents, and other community members.
5. In the areas of school-community relations, the principal's efforts to keep the ASB fully informed of all matters affecting the school and his willingness to involve the ASB in decision-making has resulted in a very cooperative and mutually supportive relationship. Involvement in hiring classified personnel, in reviewing the budget and the calendar and in planning the Native cultural courses with the bilingual aide have led the ASB to have a sense of "ownership" over the school.

This sense of ownership--which parallels the students' sense of "ownership" in the classroom--is noteworthy because in most villages Native people view the school as an alien institution, run by outsiders. Many villagers have never been inside their school during classes and, for this reason, find it a somewhat forbidding place. In Chefnak, the people are making the school their own--and would like to extend their control even further. Given the wide fluctuation in achievement test scores over the past two years, the effects of this sense of "ownership" are difficult to measure quantitatively. Yet, logically, it seems clear that a community that feels it "owns" its school is more likely to support the school, the students, and the staff than a community that views the school as a foreign body.

To state conclusively that Chaputnguak High School--or any other school--is effective and deserves emulation would be premature. To evaluate any school program requires data gathered over a period of years, not a "snapshot" of the school. At the same time, there are elements of the educational process in Chefnak which deserve closer attention and which may prove useful in other communities.

ENDNOTES

1. The author did find this combination in other villages--notably, the southwest coastal villages of Kongiganak and Toksook Bay.
2. Minutes, Chaputnguak High School Advisory School Board Regular March Meeting, 1981 (see Appendix A).
3. Ibid.
4. The author found similar relationships in other coastal villages he visited, including Kongiganak, Toksook Bay, and Mekoryuk.
5. Positions held by ASB members include: Village corporation president, corporation store manager, BIA kindergarten teacher, village public safety officer, village corporation board members.

THE METLAKATLA SCHOOLS

Carl E. Shepro

INTRODUCTION

Several aspects of the Metlakatla school system set it apart from the other two studies of school effectiveness in rural Native Alaska--its history, culture, status as a Native community, and development of the schools. Also, Metlakatla is currently organized as the Annette Island Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA). This further distinguishes this case from the others in three important respects: The district boundaries are essentially those of the village; the study includes both the elementary and secondary schools; and the local (community) school board has become the district school board.

The initial focus of the report will be on the unique history, culture, and status of the Metlakatla Indian Community, and their impact on the current school and village settings. Next we will examine the curriculum and instructional practices, the social climate of instruction, and some student achievement outcomes which appear to signify effective schooling conditions. Finally, we will examine the involvement and perceptions of key actors in the educational process--teachers, administrators, school board members, Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) members, and individuals from the community who have been active in the schools.

METHODS

Data for this study were gathered during a week-long visit to the Metlakatla community in early June, 1982. Intensive semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers of the school, four of the five-member school board, all district administrators, members of the Johnson O'Malley (JOM) and Indian Education Program PAC, and influential community leaders. Because of the recent turn-over of members on the school board, two members of the old board were also interviewed. In addition, a survey on school-community relations was administered to several parents of children in the school. Observation of classes was not possible during the visit to the site, as graduation ceremonies had already taken place and many classes were completed. However, there was ample opportunity to talk with students both in and out of the school environment. A special meeting of the school board was observed, as was a meeting of the PAC. Finally, records on the school, such as minutes of school board meetings and test scores, were collected and reviewed.

The brief site visit and the lack of longitudinal data regarding student performance necessarily limit any claims that can be made of understanding the Annette Island schools. However, the nature of the interviews conducted, and the number of people responding to those interviews allow construction of an outline of schooling in the district. Our confidence in the results of the study is increased by the general consistency of responses among the various groups of actors interviewed.

THE SETTING

Metlakatla is located on Annette Island, approximately 15 air miles south of Ketchikan. The island is accessible by regularly scheduled air and ferry service, and many residents of the island travel to Ketchikan by private boat. The village is composed of wood-frame houses, many of the size and architecture found in 1920 to 1940 vintage upper-middle class urban neighborhoods. The major streets are paved, with no unplanned dead-ends or curves; all intersections are marked with traffic control signs, and there are one-way streets in some instances to facilitate traffic movement. In other words, the village has the aspect of a planned community, well-platted, with zoning and traffic regulations. All homes observed were provided with water and sewer services.

The village had a population in 1980 of 1,119, with 343 students attending the Metlakatla schools. The schools are centrally located between the residential areas, the new Town Council buildings, and the two churches on the island--the Congregationalist (Duncan) and the Presbyterian.

Metlakatla is a Tsimshian Indian village, most residents being descendants of the Tsimshian group brought to the island by the Anglican minister, Father Duncan, in 1887. The island is a federal reservation, the only one in Alaska, with the land leased under a 99-year agreement with the federal government. The Tsimshians are originally from British Columbia, and thus were not eligible to participate in ANCSA. In addition to the Tsimshian members of the community, there are significant numbers of "Claims Act Natives" residing in the village--Tlingits, Haidas, and some Eskimo groupings--as well as a few members of Native American tribes from the lower-48, and some non-Natives, primarily members of the school community and seasonal cannery workers.

The only divergence from the "middle-America" flavor of the village is the economic system operating on the island. While the community appears to be built on the concept of private ownership, the land is controlled by the Metlakatla Indian Community, through the Town Council, as are the major economic enterprises in the village--the cannery, the sawmill, and the Natural Resource Center, which houses an aquaculture program and forest resource program in addition to other projects. These entities provide employment for residents of the community as well as for imported workers from the lower-48. Profits from the businesses are controlled by the Town Council, and are used for the provision of services to the community, including the joint funding of some projects undertaken by the school district. Thus, while the schools do provide some local employment for the community, they are not the major significant employer as is the case in many villages. Commercial fishing and labor for the Annette Island Cannery and logging related to the sawmill, account for a substantial amount of the employment opportunities available in the village. Management and technical positions in all community-owned enterprises are still held by non-Native residents of the community for the most part. There is concern on the part of some community members about the preparation students receive in school for assuming such positions.

The Tsimshian culture of Annette Island is distinct from that of other villages in Alaska, and combines elements of western culture (a strong work ethic, strong ties to a wage economy, pride in private ownership, etc.) and those of a more traditional Native culture (especially the concept of communal ownership of the economic sector). Private enterprise in the village is

limited to two grocery/convenience stores, a hardware store, a flying service, and the local hotel with an attached cafe. In addition, rental housing for the teachers has been increased by the construction of a few apartment units by one of the community members, who also owns and operates an electronic games arcade and a boutique. Subsistence has not been a major facet of the lifestyle of the Annette Island Tsimshian, and thus has not been viewed as a cultural value to be maintained. This has also been the case with the maintenance of the Tsimshian language, the result being that only the elders of the community are conversant in that language. However, there have been attempts to revive the language recently.

SCHOOL HISTORY

The school in Metlakatla opened in 1888 on a contract with the Duncan church, under the auspices of the Bureau of Education (BOE), U.S. Department of Interior. With the exception of two short periods during which the school did not operate, it continued under this arrangement until 1950. At that time, the school was transferred from the BOE (and its successor agencies) to the Territory as the nominal operating agency, and was renamed the Annette Island School. In 1957, a second school was opened. The exact dates are not clear, but the Annette Island schools did operate for some time up to the late 1960s as an independent district under the provisions of a 1937 territorial statute. During this time, the schools were supported entirely by the Town Council. In the late 1960s the expense of this method of operating became too great for the Council, and the schools were transferred to the Alaska State Operated School System (SOS). In 1976, the school system became one of the newly created REAAs and was again renamed as the Metlakatla school. Thus the village of Metlakatla has a strong history of local control of its schools, first as a religious school under contract to the BOE and later as an independent school district under territorial and state authorities. The Town Council has maintained its interest in the schools to date, and the history of local control has had an important effect on the perceptions of community members concerning the operation of community schools.

According to the Mayor of the Town Council, who served on the original school board elected upon the establishment of the REAA, the primary goal of that first board was to attain accreditation for the schools, and improve the preparation of students who attended colleges after graduation from the Metlakatla High School. This priority remained at the time the present administration was hired in 1979, and, as the present superintendent stated, an additional priority was added--to "change the directions of the school." The directions in need of change, as described by the superintendent, were:

Distrust of the school displayed by community members...student attitudes concerning the school--there was much vandalism prior to my assuming the position, there was little pride in their school, and little interest in education--and...student achievement.

At the time of the study, this situation appears to have been reversed dramatically. Both the goals of accreditation and of changing school directions have been achieved in an extremely brief period of time. Instances of vandalism to school property have been reduced to almost nothing, student attitudes toward the school appear to be very supportive, and student achievement appears much higher.

The schools have expanded since 1979, with the addition of separate facilities for the junior high students, construction of a cover for the elementary school playground area, and the start of construction of a new recreation/pool complex. In addition, the existing buildings have undergone remodeling, and many of the older furnishings have been replaced.

The elementary school consists of two older buildings, one housing grades K-3, the other grades 4-6, which are separated physically by the covered play area. The elementary principal maintains his office in the former building, and the superintendent's office is in the latter. Classrooms are large, well-lighted, and more than adequately furnished with curriculum materials and equipment appropriate to each class. The Native arts instructor has been given space in a portable building adjacent to the K-3 building, with an office area and a shop. The junior and senior high school programs are housed in more modern, larger facilities, which again are spacious, comfortable, and extremely well-equipped by the standards of most rural schools in Alaska.

In addition to the regular school curriculum, the community education program operates in the high school building at night, and that facility has been used to provide courses offered through the University of Alaska Extension Service as well. The high school gym is used for some school-related events, two of which were observed during the site visit: a public concert by students in the music program, and the annual Cultural Awareness Program. Both events were well attended by parents and other community members.

CURRICULUM

There is little to distinguish the curricula of all grade levels at Metlakatla from those of urban school districts in the lower-48, except for the definite emphasis on the basics of reading, math, language arts, and science. This emphasis is in response to the goal of changing school directions established by the school board in 1979, and has provided the direction for the major curriculum changes that have taken place since that time. As described by the superintendent, the initial emphasis on basic skills in reading and math led to the establishment of blocked time for instruction of students in these courses, and the hiring of additional teaching staff to reduce the student/teacher ratio to 10:1. As a result of the dramatic increase in SRA test scores in the K-6 program, the math program was placed back in the regular classrooms. However, because achievement levels in reading did not show a similar increase, the program is still operating under the blocked time concept. "The district relies heavily on the SRA test scores to make curriculum decisions," said the superintendent, and the district has changed the reading series used in the lower grades because of the low scores in that area. Curriculum decisions in the language arts and science programs are made on the basis of reviews done by certified staff personnel, in conjunction with the results of the standardized tests.

An annual review of the K-6 curriculum is conducted by the elementary principal, and according to him "Written curricula scope and sequence have been established for all subjects in that program." The bilingual/bicultural program at the K-6 level is a limited, but mandatory part of the educational process. It is not included in the district curriculum, as it is a program

conceived, sponsored, and paid for by the JOM/IEA PAC. Students have 45 minutes of bicultural instruction per week, with the school administrator's role in these courses limited to evaluating the teachers' performance and the scheduling of the courses. All teachers' aides working in the schools are hired through JOM/IEA, with the exception of the aide working with the Gifted and Talented program.

In the junior and senior high school program, the curriculum is more flexible, being subject to annual review on a course by course basis by the principal and the teachers. This appears to be a result, at least partially, of the difficulty noted by the superintendent in determining student achievement levels among the older students. One conclusion the superintendent reached was that:

The kids' self-image is very important to success on the tests, and that self-image was very low three years ago. This is particularly important in the junior and senior high school levels, and there was no competition there [to encourage self-image].

The district then adopted a different approach to raising student achievement levels in the upper grades, supplementing the emphasis on the basics with courses and programs designed to inspire a competitive attitude. Basketball and track have been emphasized in the sports field, in addition to cheerleading for girls; and in the music area, band competition has been encouraged.

The bilingual/bicultural program in the upper grade levels is offered as an elective, and is a part of the master schedule of courses for the first year. Students enrolling in the bilingual/bicultural courses receive one credit per year.

Finally, the high school offers courses related to the local economy as a means of providing some vocational direction for students at the school. A smoked foods and a computer program are designed to complement the operation of the cannery, and the science program is designed to focus on aquaculture, to complement the Natural Resource Center.

SOCIAL CLIMATE

The environment in the Metlakatla schools appears to be conducive to learning. The construction of new facilities and the remodeling of existing ones has provided students with large, well-lighted, and well-equipped classrooms in which to work. As the superintendent expressed it, the physical atmosphere of the school is important to learning, and that atmosphere in the Metlakatla schools is very good.

Teachers in the schools also contribute to that atmosphere. They devote a great deal of their time to classroom instruction, and they demonstrate an interest in and respect for students which provides a warmth to the classroom situation.

Teacher expectations of students reinforce this atmosphere. They tend to regard the students as being above average in ability in comparison to other schools, and thus they tend to expect more of the students. Homework, or regularly scheduled study sessions outside of school hours, are the norm in the schools, and the teachers appear to experiment with different instructional practices to find those which are most suited to the students.

These factors have contributed to the development of a positive self-image on the part of the students, the results of which are partially visible in terms of the respect they evidence for the schools' property. The buildings are all well-maintained, clean, and free from the visual evidences of student vandalism (marks and carvings in walls, desks, etc.) which are prevalent in many schools.

The school environment is also instilling the work ethic, and an ethic of competition, in the students. Students and community members appear to be very proud of the accomplishments of the band, and of individual members of the sports teams. A sense of school identity has developed as a result of this, as well as a sense of identification with the school, and competition with other schools in these endeavors is anticipated.

The school climate does present some problems as well. While the teachers' expectations of students' achievement is higher than average, they tend to think that few Metlakatla students will graduate from college, an attitude which may carry over to the classroom and have some impact on student self-image. They also tend to think that the reliance on standardized test scores to evaluate student achievement and academic levels is misplaced. Instead of basing comparisons on national achievement levels, they tend to support comparisons on a statewide, or even regional basis.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Effectiveness of the Metlakatla schools can be measured in several ways. In the 7-12 program, absenteeism has declined from the plateau reached in the 1978-79 school year of nearly 14 percent, to approximately 6 percent during the 1981-82 year. There are now few disciplinary problems say administrators, and the rate of students dropping out of the school is only 3-5 percent of the student population. The rate of tardiness at the school has declined dramatically also, indicating that the students want to attend their classes.

In the K-6 program, no such problems existed prior to 1979. The major change demonstrated by the students is an acceptance of discipline and order within the classrooms and the school in general. The students appear interested in school and in learning. This observation is supported by parent comments concerning their childrens' attitudes about the school.

Academic achievement of students at the Metlakatla schools as measured by standardized tests is very good, when compared to rural small schools in Alaska. SRA test scores are significantly above the levels of 1979 for all grades. However, there is a difference in gains between the K-6 and the 7-12 programs. The K-6 levels showed composite score increases of 32 national percentage points, and the students at all grade levels scored at or above the national percentile rankings in most subject areas. However, while the 7-12 program showed composite score increases of 21 national percentage points, the students in the 10-12 grade levels scored below the national percentile in almost all subject areas. If the junior high school scores were removed from the composite scoring, the overall gains would be substantially less. In short, senior high school achievement levels, although they have improved significantly, are still below the national norms.

SCHOOL ACTORS AND LOCAL CONTROL

Interviews with the principal actors who operate and influence the schools in Metlakatla--the teachers, the administrators, members of the district school board, members of the PAC, and officials of the Town Council--indicated areas of satisfaction with the schools, as well as areas in which there are problems and concerns.

All major actors in the school, and parents and community members, are satisfied with the results that have been achieved by the schools. The speed with which the schools received accreditation and the apparent ease by which student attitudes concerning their self-image, respect for the schools, and respect for education in general were changed--all are viewed with satisfaction by school participants. In addition, there is widespread satisfaction with the ability of the schools to raise student academic achievement levels, as measured by the SRA scores. However, some parents and community leaders were concerned that the emphasis on test scores would obscure the problems graduates of the school system were experiencing when they entered college programs.

The major areas of concern in the community are the way the schools are operated and the governance of the schools. The strong history of local control of the schools, and the sense of pride in the Metlakatla Native Community, undoubtedly contribute to this situation. However, two recent events that affect school governance make these concerns manifest. At the December 1981 meeting of the district school board, four board members tendered their resignations in response to an opinion by the district's attorney that they were in violation of the state's conflict of interest laws regarding nepotism. (All these members had immediate relatives employed by the district in some capacity.) Several community members suspected the resignations were called for to harness the board--which had become assertive vis-a-vis the school administration. Although the allegations may be unfounded, they point to the existence of some tension in school governance and school-community relations.

The second, and related, concern of importance is the bilingual/bicultural program and its relationship to the district curriculum. Community members and parents express general satisfaction with the bicultural program, but they would like to expand it--and to develop a complementary Tsimshian language revival program. The school district has been less involved in this program than previously; its participation is limited to use of the teacher aides and tutors funded by JOM, and supporting the Native arts and history classes funded by the JOM and IEA budgets. When the Town Council took actions designed to allow transfer of the JOM program to the district, many of the community leaders objected, fearing that they would lose control of the cultural programs. In a letter to the Town Council, the PAC expressed "a strong feeling that if the school district assumes the program that the Native cultural aspects would either be lost or greatly reduced." In addition, some community members were apprehensive that a Tsimshian language program would not be developed if control of the programs already in place passed from the community to the district.

Concern over the status and operation of Native programs appears to reflect political tension between the community and the school, tension now represented in differences between the school board and the PAC. This situation

is not unlike that found in other rural schools in Alaska, when cultural programs in the schools are at issue. Nor is it dissimilar to the problems in major urban school districts confronted by demands for greater community control in the schools. In any event, the situation poses problems for school-community relations, as well as effective school governance, in Metlakatla.

The PAC is an eight member, elected board with budgetary and program authority over the various aspects of the JOM and IEA programs. All members of the PAC are Natives, most having resided in Metlakatla the majority of their lives. All the members have attended some college, two are college graduates teaching in the school, and most of the remainder work in the school as classified personnel. Most have children attending the schools as well, and are thus more familiar with school events and operations than is normally true of community education committees.

The PAC meets monthly at the high school, with occasional attendance at the meetings by the high school principal, some teachers, and an average of two or three community members. As a result of training provided by Region III, U.S. Department of Education, it is aware of its authority and responsibility for the JOM/IEA programs, as well as the limitations on its ability to control programs within the district schedule. Its most significant activity has been the initiation and expansion of Native culture programs in the schools, with the focus being the revival of Tsimshian culture and history in Metlakatla. Toward that end, it has funded the majority of teachers' aides and tutors working in the schools, student travel related to Native culture courses, and the introduction of Native language and traditional activity classes for the community. The PAC has a limited influence on the governance and operation of the schools, having had no role in the hiring or evaluation of any personnel other than the aides and tutors sponsored by JOM and IEA. The major area of influence it does exercise over school operations is its authority to sign off on budgetary proposals involving the expenditure of all JOM or IEA funds. This is an authority the PAC is very protective of, as it is perceived as a means of exercising a minimum of community control over the bilingual/bicultural programs.

While past relations between the PAC and the district school board have been characterized as close, those between the PAC and the recently appointed school board appear to be somewhat strained. There is little communication between members of the school board and the PAC at this time.

The district school board is a five-member body, composed of three Tsimshian Natives, one Native American of Crow descent, and one Caucasian. All are residents of Metlakatla, three of them employed in some capacity by the Town Council, one unemployed, and one self-employed. The board meets monthly at the high school, with regular attendance by the superintendent, both principals (acting as district staff), and occasional attendance by some teachers. Members of the PAC regularly attend these meetings, as parents rather than as representatives of the PAC. With the exception of the chairman of the board, the members are recent appointees to their positions, and had received no school board training at the time of the visit. Thus they were dependent on the administration for information concerning the school board's role in school operations.

In summary, there is a general consensus among all major actors that the emphasis on teaching the basics in the schools is correct, and should be continued. There is a further consensus among parents and community influentials that an expanded Tsimshian language program should be established, and that the direction of the cultural programs should be continued, a consensus that is not shared by the administration or the school board. While this general support for the results of the schools' operations exists, there is evidence of a perception that the community does not have influence in the development of curriculum for the schools, particularly relating to Native culture and language, and that such influence is necessary.

CONCLUSIONS

The Metlakatla case has been described at length because, in our opinion, it is difficult to arrive at any firm conclusions concerning the effectiveness of the school system for the community. In part, the difficulty arises from characteristics of the district that make the bases of comparison uncertain. That is, in many respects the Annette Island REAA more resembles school districts within larger urban areas than it does Native schools in rural Alaska, while in other respects the comparison with the latter is appropriate.

The tradition of local control over the governance of the schools, the educational levels attained by key community actors in the schools, the tensions developing within the community concerning governance of the schools, and the lack of a primary language other than English combined with a strong community emphasis on academic accreditation, scholastic achievement, and college entrance for the students create conditions favorable to comparison of the district with those in urban areas. On the other hand, the reservation status of the island, the cultural and traditional basis of the economic structure, the concern for preservation of Tsimshian language and culture, and the REAA status of the district are factors which make comparison with Native schools in rural Alaska more appropriate.

Despite this uncertainty, some conclusions can be offered concerning the effectiveness of Metlakatka schools. The factors which seem to be associated strongly with academic achievement are:

1. The school climate of the school is conducive to student learning. Discipline in the schools is fair and accepted by the students, positive student self-image has been encouraged and developed, and the students are generally regarded as having the ability and the interest to achieve and learn.
2. The teachers in the Metlakatla schools encourage the students to learn and support that learning and the acquisition of academic work habits by spending a greater amount of their time on classroom instruction than appears to be the case in many Native schools in rural Alaska.
3. Teacher-parent relationships involving school activities appear to be quite good, the parents being likely to attend parent/teacher conferences, to support the school with regard to student discipline, and to encourage their childrens' academic development.

4. Although the superintendent is perceived to be a controversial figure in the community and the school, he is generally regarded as being the most important actor in school governance, and there is general satisfaction with his performance in achieving the academic priorities set by the community and the school.
5. There is an apparent high level of community and parent satisfaction with the academic program of the schools, at least insofar as the current student achievement scores indicate that progress.

On the other hand, there are questions about the effectiveness of the school in meeting community needs.

1. Many community members and parents have expressed reservations concerning the heavy reliance on SRA test scores as a means of measuring academic achievement, and some have expressed concerns regarding the accuracy of such tests, concerns similar to those noted in The Governor's Task Force On Effective Schooling.
2. Community members appear not to be involved in the development of curriculum pertaining to the vocational and culturally oriented programs in the schools, and feel that they should have some input.
3. Some school programs appear to vary from community values, a case in point being the smoked foods project. The entrepreneurial focus of this program potentially conflicts with the communal economic values operating in the community.
4. There is little social interaction between teachers and community members. Most community members feel that the teachers have isolated themselves from community activities, while many teachers indicate that community attitudes account for the poor relations that do exist.

THE TANACROSS CASE

Gerald A. McBeath

OVERVIEW

The Tanacross school, a part of the Alaska Gateway Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA), represents an interesting case of effective schooling that differs from the two previous studies. As a "drive in" bush community, Tanacross is far less isolated than most small rural schools in Alaska. And it is an elementary school with insufficient numbers in any grade to observe fully the effects of different instructional practices.

Our report on Tanacross is descriptive: We will look at the unique setting of the school and the village community, and briefly narrate the history of the school. Then we will describe the curriculum and instructional practices which appear to have been effective in Tanacross, the social climate of instruction, and some student outcomes. Finally, we will report the views and perceptions of school actors--teachers, local board members, and parents of the community who have played parts in the school system.

METHODS

We visited the Tanacross school and community on two occasions during the 1981-82 school year. Our first visit, for three days, occurred in early January 1982. The second visit, of one day's duration, was near the end of the school year in mid-May. Notwithstanding the brevity of the visits, data were gathered systematically. Lengthy semi-structured interviews on school operations, policies, and procedures were conducted with the teachers of the school, all five members of the Advisory School Board (ASB), the member of the regional school board (RSB) from the Tanacross area, two community influentials, and three members of the district staff who were particularly knowledgeable about the Tanacross school. In addition, we asked questions of seven parents of children in the school, who completed a survey on school-community relations. The three classes of the school--preschool, K-3, and 4-8--were observed briefly, and there were opportunities to talk with students both in- and out-of-school. Finally, records on the school, such as minutes of ASB and RSB meetings and test scores, were collected and reviewed.

Obviously, no claims of understanding the Tanacross school can be made on the basis of quick site visits, and in the absence of longitudinal student data and observation over time. Nevertheless, our interviews with the most informed and responsible school participants as well as with those who were apathetic about school conditions allow us to outline the elements of Tanacross schooling. That we heard little variance in the accounts of different actors recalling the same topics increases our confidence in the information we gathered.

THE SETTING

The village of Tanacross is some 12 miles northwest of Tok, located one mile off milepost 1325 of the Alaska Highway. The village is "new," having been relocated from the old village site on the north side of the Tanana River. The village consists of twenty-odd colored, single-unit homes built on both sides of a 0.7 mile loop which adjoins the access road to the highway. In the center of the loop sits the community hall. The school, also newly constructed (in 1980), is set apart from the village loop and the road to the old village and airstrip.

The 1980 census recorded a population of 117 for the village of Tanacross. Approximately one-fourth of the residents of the village are school-age. Some 22 attend the Tanacross school (including 7 pre-school children), and less than half that number attend the Tok high school. Tanacross is a Native village, and most residents are members of the Tanah branch of the Athabascan Indians, with family connections in Dot Lake and Tetlin. Since the 1920s, however, Tanacross has been connected to the Alaska road system, and this has had a major disruptive effect on traditional Native life. Today, few Tanacross Natives speak any Athabascan dialect frequently; and to all youth of the community English is the first language.

Tanacross Natives once relied on the land and water resources of their area for subsistence. Now, limited trapping, fishing, and wood cutting activities define the residual subsistence culture, and Tanacross residents are tied tightly into the wage economy. For over 20 years, there has been no village store in Tanacross, and residents do their shopping in Tok. The passage of ANCSA led to the formation of Tanacross Inc., a village for-profit corporation, and its activities have contributed some income to the village. Two residents, a teachers' aide and a custodian, are employed by the Tanacross school. There are no other regular employment opportunities available locally, and adults of the community must look outside for jobs. Seasonal work is available, and several adult men are employed by the state Department of Transportation (DOTPF). This employment, as well as income assistance, is arranged through state labor and non-profit corporation offices in Tok. In many respects, then, the village of Tanacross is a satellite of the crossroads community of Tok.

SCHOOL HISTORY

From 1932 until 1967, Tanacross youth were taught in a village BIA day school covering grades K-8. Few students continued their education beyond the 8th grade; those who did were more likely to attend regional high schools than to matriculate at Mt. Edgecumbe or boarding schools outside Alaska. The pattern of schooling was altered in 1967, when as part of an early state-federal agreement, the BIA school in Tanacross was transferred to state control, under the State-Operated School System (SOS). Those villagers who recalled this period maintained that parents were not consulted prior to the changeover.

A more important event was the closing of the school in 1974, and the bussing of Tanacross youth to Tok for elementary and secondary education. The old village site in which the community school was located was subject to spring and fall flooding, and the village was relocated. Another school was not built in the new village, partly because the number of school-age persons in the village did not seem to justify the expenditure required for a new school at a time when state educational resources were scarce, and partly because the larger Tok school seemed to promise a superior educational environment for the youth of Tanacross. Also, the new village site was even closer to Tok than the old.

Thus, there was an ironic twist to the onset of decentralized education in the new Alaska Gateway REAA, so far as Tanacross parents were concerned. Other Native settlements had their own schools, but Tanacross students went to school in Tok. Elsewhere, there were mandatory Community School Committees (CSCs), through which parents had some influence over school operations, but Tanacross parents had input only through the Tok school CSCs (one for the high school and one for the elementary school).

The immediate source of discontent of Tanacross parents, however, was the situation their children faced in the Tok school. At a time when the Alaska Gateway District, along with other districts in the state, was undergoing investigation by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) for compliance with the Lau decision, when inter-ethnic relations were tense, Tanacross parents felt their children were being discriminated against. Charges of racism hit the press, and this brought on a campaign for vindication by the Tok Teachers Association. Parents complained that Tanacross Native youth were arbitrarily categorized as problem students, who could not learn in the normal classroom environment, and were lumped into the Tok special education program. Parents reported that their children were ill-at-ease in the Tok school; and as indicators of the inappropriateness of this educational milieu for their needs, parents pointed to the high rate of absenteeism and low retention of Tanacross youth. Parents formed a steering committee and, in April 1978, presented the RSB a petition with 53 signatures that asked the State Department of Education for a school of their own.

The Tanacross issue was aired in an emotional series of regular and special RSB and community meetings in 1978. Initially, a majority of the RSB and the district superintendent of that time refused to support a school in Tanacross, for several reasons: This seemed a step backward to some district actors, the creation of a segregated school out of an integrated educational setting; and further, it seemed potentially in violation of OCR regulations. There was no money for construction of a new school in Tanacross, as maintenance and repair of existing schools had stretched construction dollars to the limit. And there seemed to be too few students in Tanacross to support an adequate instructional program.

Tanacross parents perceived that the majority of the RSB and superintendent did not favor a new community school because Native educational needs ranked low on their list of priorities and because a new Tanacross school would reduce resources for the Tok school. In the face of district opposition,

Alaska Legal Services filed a complaint with the OCR on behalf of Tanacross parents. Thereupon, the RSB reconsidered, and it endorsed a plan for an elementary school program in Tanacross.

The Tanacross ASB was elected in January 1979, a teacher was hired, and the community school held its first classes in the community hall that September. Parents had won the support of Senator John Sackett, then chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and he marshalled votes for a special legislative appropriation that provided funds for school construction. The new school building was ready for classes by fall 1980.

The new Tanacross school is a point of pride to members of the community--partly, one suspects, because active parent involvement brought it into being. The building is simple, yet appropriately designed for the educational program. Three of the four rooms in the building are used for school classes, and the fourth, smallest room provides space for an office--a secretary's desk, a desk for the principal teacher, and storage for some equipment and school records. Preschool students meet with the Native teachers' aide in the small multi-purpose room. K-3 students sit in movable metal desks in a brightly-colored, cheerfully decorated classroom. Grade 4-8 students work in a slightly larger classroom decorated with maps, and with books, magazines, reference materials in abundance.

The school has provided space for an adult education program, and it is sometimes used for plays and shows performed by students for members of the community. Every Thursday evening, the school sponsors the showing of a recently-released movie for parents and community members. Although less than two years old, an addition to the school is now being planned--a gymnasium/large multi-purpose room with a separate entry--which will expand physical education opportunities for school children and provide additional recreation space for adults in the community.

CURRICULUM

The course of study for students in the Tanacross school is not innovative. It is best described as a traditional grade school program which emphasizes development of basic skills in reading, math, and communication. A limited amount of time in all classes is devoted to specialized Native Alaska topics and concerns. The distinctive characteristic of the school program is the method of instructional delivery; the distinctive quality of Tanacross schooling is the close agreement between teachers and parents on the substance and method of education.

Instruction in the lower grades emphasizes development of reading skills. The textbooks are standard readers used in the lower-48. These are supplemented with special reading kits and other hands-on materials. The teacher employs several grouping patterns for the class. Advantage is taken of the small size of the class by allocating time for self-paced instruction.

The community becomes a classroom resource when the teacher uses local examples to clarify vocabulary and specify concepts and in storytelling. The teachers' aide, whose responsibility is divided between conducting the morning preschool class and helping students in written and oral work, will on

occasion be present in the classroom to assist a student with lessons. Little classroom time is used for non-academic subjects, and interruptions from other classes, or from activities unrelated to classroom work, are rare.

Instruction in grades 4-8 similarly emphasizes the basics--reading, language and math concepts, and the development of communication skills. The theme is competency-based instruction with frequent drills. Again, standard textbooks are used along with several types of materials--newsmagazines such as Time and Newsweek, audiovisual materials (a communications unit involved student use of a videotape machine), and a micro-computer. The small size of this class also permits considerable individualized instruction, and small group activity. For example, to practice public speaking students give book reports, make up stories and commercials. Observation of this class revealed students who were engaged either in individual projects or class work. In one instance, when a student appeared inattentive, he was addressed with firm discipline.

Somewhat more class time in grades 4-8 is allocated to non-academic subjects, in the general area of Native crafts. The school participates in the Aurora program, and over the last three years students have learned how to make Indian drums, snowshoes, and sleds. These projects have involved some members of the community as resource persons; and they have brought all members of the class into a group activity applying some academic skills, while emphasizing students' Native heritage. In addition to the finished crafts, students produced instruction manuals which are shared with students in other schools.

In two further respects, both related to instructional procedure, the 4-8 school program is different from that of many other small rural schools in Alaska. All students are assigned homework, which may take up to one and one-half hours of their time in the evening. Usually, the assignments are taken from language arts and math workbooks. On some occasions, students will also complete school games at home--for example, seeing how many words they can create out of a long polysyllable such as hippopotamus. Homework is checked upon submission the following day, and successful completion of homework assignments is rewarded. (Only students who have completed successfully the minimum number of homework assignments are permitted to participate in the class field trip.)

Second, the teacher of grades 4-8 who is also the principal teacher of the school is a task master and disciplinarian, and he insures that students spend time-on-task by the judicious administration of punishment. The rules seem to be spelled out to students (see Student Handbook in the Appendix), and the administration of punishment does not appear to be arbitrary or capricious.

SOCIAL CLIMATE

The environment of the Tanacross school appears to be very conducive to learning. Teachers are unanimous about the centrality of academic values in the curriculum and the development of students' competence in basic skills. They are warm and caring in their treatment of school children. They have high expectations for students, believing that they do not lack academic ability,

and that they can achieve in school, complete high school work without difficulty and perhaps attend college. Furthermore, the teachers by their positive attitudes and by their design of situations in which students accomplish tasks appear to have fostered in students a respect for their own abilities. Teachers are demanding of students, insist that they work hard in school and, in the case of older students, out of school too. As the principal teacher remarked: "I expect much, give much, and get much."

The ethic of school work is one which many students in Tanacross seem to have internalized. At the end of one school day, more than half of the older students remained in the classroom--some did their homework, but others used reference materials unrelated to any assignment or continued work on individual projects. And, during evening interviews, several students were observed doing homework with an air of interest, in competition with the TV fare watched by adults.

The social environment of the school also encourages the development of responsibility and civic discipline. There are rules of behavior in the school which are simple and enforced. Students are required to remove their boots and place them in a rack and hang up their coats upon entering the school. They are expected to keep their immediate work area and the school as a whole clean. Older students are expected to be courteous and polite in all intercourse with adults: Personal requests are prefaced with "may I" and "please;" hands are raised to catch the attention of teachers; and students are encouraged to respect the social space of others. Within the low-pressured classroom environment, movement is not discouraged and students do not appear to be confined. Nonetheless, the dominant mood reflected in the school is one of order.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Several measures describe the current effectiveness of the Tanacross school, though the relatively short period of operation of the school makes judgments about its program premature. In the last two years, the rate of daily school attendance has been over 95 percent. No students have dropped out of school, there has been no vandalism and there have been no consistent disciplinary problems. Parents who were interviewed were unanimous in their observations that children wanted to go to school, enjoyed being there, and were learning. Parents and teachers report that Tanacross students are doing well in the Tok high school.

Students in the Tanacross school are achieving well academically, as measured by standardized tests. The students who took the statewide assessment test in 1981 scored at the top of the scale. Scores of Tanacross students on the Iowa Basics (used throughout the Alaska Gateway District) in 1980 and 1981 were consistently above the districtwide averages. The districtwide reputation of the Tanacross elementary school is very good, as pointed out by a regional leader:

Presently the situation in Tanacross is impressive. They have good test results and a good staff. They lead the district. I can't help feel this is attributable to the staff which is exceptional. There are comparable budgets, larger staffs elsewhere than in Tanacross, but not the same results.

SCHOOL ACTORS AND LOCAL CONTROL

Interviews with those who operate and directly influence the Tanacross school--the teachers (including the principal teacher) and ASB members--indicated satisfaction with the way the school is run and the results that have been achieved. These interviews, and observations of parents in the community, also pointed out two concerns that may potentially affect the governance of the school.

Two certified teachers work in the Tanacross school, and they are assisted by the teachers' aide whose position is funded by Title I. The aide is a Tanacross Native, high-school educated, with previous experience and a strong interest in preschool education. The principal teacher has nearly 20 years of rural Alaska teaching experience and taught at the Tok school before he was selected as the Tanacross principal teacher. His competence in the classroom and his skill as a disciplinarian are well-respected by ASB members and parents in Tanacross, and his reputation in the region as an effective teacher is well-established. The second teacher has taught in Alaska for four years, is regarded as very effective, and is well-liked by students and parents. Both of the certified teachers, who are Caucasians, know all members of the Tanacross community, and are in regular communication with them, primarily through contacts at the school. Neither certified teacher lives in Tanacross, however. (The land of the immediate Tanacross community is all Native allotment.) This factor, plus the lack of a large recreational area in the school (and the presence of a community hall, perhaps) limit community utilization of the school and the development of stronger school-community relations.

The teachers of the school have taken the initiative and are largely responsible for the structure of the curriculum, educational materials used in the school, community use of the school building, behavior policies, and student activities, such as the annual field trips. Members of the ASB are generally agreed that the responsibility for the success of the school rests with the teachers. An area of concern is in Native programs, for some parents would like Athabascan language to be taught in the school.

The five ASB members are all Tanacross Natives and have lived in the village most of their lives. Four of the five members have completed high school; three are employed seasonally as equipment operators, one is a nurse, and the fifth works in the regional non-profit corporation. All ASB members have children in the Tanacross school and regularly hear from their children the events of the school day. Two ASB members have been on the board since its inauguration in January 1979, the third was elected in 1980, and two are recently-elected members whose spouses have been board members.

The board meets monthly at the school, and its meetings are attended by school and district staff and occasionally by community adults. Although ASB members feel their competence as a board comprehends all phases of school operations, their most significant activity has been in the areas of staff selection, conduction the 05 regulation review in the community, use of discretionary funds, and design of school facilities. The ASB was involved in the selection of the principal teacher (who has been at the school since it was established), the second certified teacher, and in determining criteria for the selection of

the teachers' aide. Although the ASB has no procedure for evaluating the work of school staff, in the small community of Tanacross board members are aware of the reactions and responses of children and parents, and if there were a complaint they feel they "would have it taken care of."

The ASB doubles as the Johnson O'Malley and Indian Education Parent Advisory Committee (PAC), and ASB discussions frequently concern the application process for federal funding, the regulations and allocation of program funds. The principal teacher is involved in these discussions as are members of the district office. Finally, the ASB has been extensively involved in planning for the addition to the Tanacross school and in recommending local hire in its construction.

What might appear to be a limited involvement of the ASB in school governance, and limited community involvement in general, is perhaps explained by the high degree of satisfaction with the way the school is operated. As one board member remarked: "There's no problem with the school, ever."

The area of Native programs is somewhat difficult to interpret. First, the district is not required to operate a state bilingual education program, for all Native youth in the district are native speakers of English. Thus, no regular funding is available for schools in which there might be a demand for a Native language program. Second, although some ASB and community members want an Athabascan language program, this is presently a concern and not an issue. There appears to be an unwillingness to sacrifice any part of the current program to establish a language course. As one board member remarked:

"We want the 3 R's, the basics. They are more important than Athabascan. All must make a living in the world and they need English. (But) I hate to admit that our language shouldn't be number one." ;

There is consensus among teachers, ASB, and parents that the school's first priority is the teaching of basic academic skills. And ASB members are complimentary about the quality of teaching in the school and the improvement of their children's reading and math abilities. Too, they approve of the emphasis placed on student behavior. They hear reports of this at school, and they see evidence of it in the behavior of their children at home. While there have been critical comments by one or two parents concerning this aspect of the school environment, ASB members in their own investigations have supported the principal teacher and believe that the methods used by teachers are appropriate for their community. One community leader told why he thought such methods were necessary: "The kids gripe...say (it is) too harsh.... But the kids don't learn it in the homes. Things have deteriorated since my childhood by 50 percent."

The extent of community involvement in the Tanacross school is the second problematical factor in its development. On the one hand, this concern is proprietorial: some parents felt that the school ought to be open in the evenings and on weekends for their use. Given the limited facilities of the school at present, however, this does not seem to be a major issue for most residents. On the other hand, there is concern about parent participation. Two board members felt that there should be greater involvement of parents in school activities, and they pointed out the interlocking officeholding of a handful of

community members. Lack of attendance at ASB meetings and in affairs directly concerning their children was a sign to them of apathy. The others members of the ASB, and the parents interviewed who did not sit on the board, thought there was good attendance at school functions, such as the school naming ceremony, movies, the Christmas drama, a dinner prepared by students at the school (which "almost everyone went to"). One respondent added that the community hall was available for potlatches and holiday celebrations.

The feeling most parents seemed to have was that there had been active community involvement in the formation of the Tanacross school, that the ASB was doing a good job, and that there were opportunities for whatever further degree of participation the people of the village wanted.

CONCLUSIONS

We have described the Tanacross case at length, because in our opinion the school seems to work well for the community. The factors which appear to make the Tanacross school effective at this point in time are:

1. The school is new to the community, and is the culmination of community-wide action, even struggle (against visible targets--the majority of the RSB and conditions in the Tok school in 1978).
2. The community was consulted in the selection of the principal teacher of the school, and the community and ASB repose confidence and trust in the qualifications and work of the school staff.
3. There is unified instruction in basic academic skills, and school actors are agreed that the curriculum and instructional practices are appropriate for the community.
4. School work links students with family and community concerns.
5. School operations are nearly autonomous. They reflect interests of those who work in the school, have children in it, and are immediately affected by it. Since 1979, the district office, once perceived as an antagonist to the Tanacross community, has become a strong facilitator of programs for Tanacross youth.

COMPARISON OF CASES

Each of the schools we have studied appears to be successful in educating Native youth, but as our reports have pointed out, the circumstances and conditions vary widely from case to case. In this conclusion to our report, we abstract the elements of effectiveness we have observed across the three very dissimilar cases. We also attempt analysis, by specifying some conditions under which effective practices seem to work.

SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES AND POLICIES

Five practices used in schools or policies of the school administration seemed significantly associated with achievement in the schools we examined.

Allocated Time on Instruction

All cases share as their chief distinguishing characteristic the allocation of the major portion of class time to academic subjects, whether described as mastery learning, basic skills, or competency-based instruction. Reading, language arts, math and science, communication--these are the basis of the curriculum in the high achieving schools under study. Student extra-curricular activities are part of the school program, but in two of the cases, a sharp line is drawn between these activities and academic subjects. Moreover, it is expected that extra-curricular activities will occur after regular class hours, in the evenings, or on weekends.

Time on Task

There is little interference with class time because of extraneous activities. In the two smaller schools, Chefornek and Tanacross, housekeeping duties are few and do not detract from class time. In the larger schools of Metlakatla, the school administration has structured the curriculum and trained staff to limit interruptions to teaching.

Diagnostic Use of Testing

In each of the cases, standardized tests are used to pinpoint weaknesses in school programs and as an aid in curricular design--to make adjustments of time to improve learning in math, for example. The district office prepares relatively elaborate breakdowns of test data, showing school-district comparisons, by grade level and topic area. The Metlakatla schools have what appears to be a highly sophisticated understanding of the SRA series, which is communicated effectively to teachers. Knowledge of test results is shared with school boards and committees. Some community members, however, feel that test data are assigned greater importance in the instructional program than warranted.

Discipline

The environment of all three school systems was an ordered one, but this was accomplished in different ways. In the Tanacross school, punishment was applied in cases of infractions of behavioral rules. In the Metlakatla school, school order appears to be the result of a new pride in school, fostered through competitive programs such as basketball, and this has resolved problems of tardiness, vandalism, and disruptive classroom behavior. In Chefornek, an aura of student and community proprietorship of the school has developed. Parents and teachers in no community we studied thought that there was any discipline problem.

Principal as Instructional Leader

All three schools (and districts) had developed systems to reduce the drain on principals' time brought on by maintenance concerns, and it was possible for them to attend primarily to academic leadership. A good example is the Tanacross school, which appears to have few maintenance problems, both because of careful design and preventative maintenance.

The three cases include two principal teachers and two principals. Both principal teachers are positively evaluated with respect to their instructional capabilities and their ability to serve as emulative models for other teachers in the school. In both Chefornek and Tanacross, principal teachers develop a coordinated approach to instruction, and this is followed by the other teacher(s) in the school. In the Metlakatla schools, principals evaluate teaching staff and observe classroom instruction frequently.

SCHOOL SOCIAL SYSTEM

Three aspects of the environment of the schools seemed significantly associated with achievement.

Social Climate

In each of the three cases, the climate of the school and classroom were regarded as warm and accepting. Physical factors contributed to the climate of warmth--attention had been paid to reducing the sterile institutional atmosphere of the school by use of bright colors, attractive decorations, flexible seating arrangements. Most important in all of the schools, however, was the attempt of school teachers to make students feel "at home" in the classroom. Parents of the three communities were unanimous in saying that their children wanted to be in school.

Expectations

In all of the cases, teachers and school administrators believed that children could achieve and learn, that they were able to do the school work assigned them. In Chefornek, teachers impressed on children that they "could do as well in school as the 'Gussiks' in Anchorage." Similar observations were made by teachers and community members in Tanacross and Metlakatla.

Furthermore, teachers and administrators expected that students would graduate from high school. There were more limited expectations regarding the ability of students to enroll at and graduate from college, with a slightly greater number feeling that training in junior colleges was within the reach of the student body.

Reinforcement

There also appeared to be good reinforcement mechanisms at work in the three schools. There was a homework policy in all the schools, and homework was graded and returned to students quickly. In fact, in Chefnak, teachers worked hard to return all classwork as soon as possible. Tanacross teachers use drills and in-class exercises which permit several opportunities daily to reward good performance. In the two schools in which there was an opportunity to observe classes, good work of students was praised frequently, which doubtless has had an effect on the development of a positive self-concept in students.

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Five characteristics of the relationships between schools and communities are worth noting:

Parent-Teacher Conferences

In all three cases, conferences between parents and teachers are scheduled regularly (at least twice a year), and teachers in all schools report that two-thirds or more of the parents come to the school for these meetings. In two of the schools, the conferences are the major means of contact between parents and teachers in the school. In the third case, Chefnak, conferences are supplemented by additional means.

Parent Involvement in the School Program

There is some use (by at least one teacher) of parents and community adults as classroom resources in all of the cases. The most prevalent form of involvement is in connection with the Native culture programs at the schools. Parent involvement is crystallized in the hiring of Natives from the community to work in the school as aides to teachers. The greatest use of aides we found was in the Chefnak school, where children are from a bilingual or monolingual (Yupik) background. There, Native teachers' aides have been used in the classroom to assist students understand lessons in English, sometimes by translating information into Yupik. In Tanacross and Metlakatla, community members have been hired as aides to teachers, and they have drawn school and community into closer contact. The teachers' aides are used to present information on Native culture and history and Native crafts in all schools, and their positions in the schools are tied into academic programs. It is noteworthy that six of the thirty-seven teachers in Metlakatla are Natives.

School-Community Communication

Each school system used a three-tiered system of communication with parents. The meetings of the ASB (or district school board and PAC in the case

of Metlakatla) were a forum in which information about the school and its programs could be transmitted to community members. Attendance by parents was low at these meetings, but board members in all cases were opinion leaders who talked regularly with adults in the community. Second, information was communicated to parents via students, and this involved slippage, as is typically the case. Third, there were varied informal contacts between parents and teachers. In Chefnak, there appeared to be the closest relationships between teachers and parents, extending beyond the school to joint participation in community activities. In Tanacross, the principal teacher is a long-term resident of the region and is engaged in an activity, dog mushing, which brings him into contact with many parents outside the school. In Metlakatla, the largest of the three communities, there tended to be few contacts away from the school, except of Native teachers.

Community Use and Ownership of School

The three cases represent different ways of arranging relationships between schools and parents. In Chefnak, students and parents have a sense of ownership of their school, and this sense contributes to the favorable social climate of the school. The Chefnak school, however, is the only large public building in town besides the BIA school, and public ownership and use is thus a pressing concern. In Tanacross, presently the school has limited space, and there is an interest in responsibly managing the school, for it is an important community asset. In this community, there is another public building, the community hall available for community use. In Metlakatla, there has been a successful effort to inculcate a sense of pride in the school and community ownership. In this community, too, there are several other public buildings, and there appears to be no pressure to expand community use of school facilities.

School Governance

The greatest range of variance we found was in the operational (political and administrative) arrangements of the school. First, there were major differences in the extent to which community school committees or boards represented well the adults in the community. The closest match appeared in Chefnak. In Tanacross, some apathy of parents makes it difficult to determine whether the ASB represents community interests well. In Metlakatla, there are two organizations which represent the community--the PAC and district board--and thus there are opportunities for more comprehensive representation (as well as tension).

Second, we found slight differences in board-administration relations. Two schools--Chefnak and Tanacross--showed highly trusting attitudes of local board members toward the principal teachers and school staff, which may be a result of the small size of the schools and individual characteristics of principal teachers.

CHAPUTNGUAK HIGH SCHOOL
Chefornak

PHILOSOPHY

Chaputnguak High School believes that it is impossible to determine in advance what an individual student may do after he or she finishes high school. All students should be adequately prepared to succeed in college or university programs in most areas. We must be particularly sure that every student is prepared to enter areas in science, engineering and technology as these present the most opportunities for future employment and community betterment yet are most demanding in terms of adequate preparation during the high school years.

Students must not be given credit for simply attending school but must demonstrate mastery of each subject in order to receive credit. The program must be individualized to adjust for different rates of learning allowing each individual student to learn at the rate most efficient for him or her. Only students who are clearly not able to master the required subject matter in a reasonable amount of time shall be placed in special programs.

The subject matter shall be taught in such a way that it gives the students the best preparation for daily living in the village, solving village problems and for meeting the needs of the village in terms of adequately trained personnel.

Students who have mastered the minimum requirements for graduation shall study elective subjects in vocational areas.

In addition to teaching the subject matter, the high school shall assure that each student develops and maintains top quality working habits, respect for the villagers, a dedication to community service, respect for the community religion, and shall be dedicated to long range improvement of himself or herself and the village.

GOALS

Chaputnguak High School shall adequately prepare every student for success in college and university programs including those in the fields of science and technology. In doing so, every student shall be adequately prepared to meet the village needs in terms of adequately trained personnel to meet both domestic and employment needs.

APPENDIX A

CHAPUTNGUAK HIGH SCHOOL Chefornak

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

REQUIRED SUBJECTS

Algebra I, one credit

Algebra I consists of studying the Holt Algebra I textbook passing all of the publisher's chapter tests with a score of 80 percent or better.

Algebra II, one credit

Algebra II is a continuation of Algebra I and Algebra I is a prerequisite course. Algebra II consists of studying the Holt Algebra II textbook and passing all of the publisher's chapter tests with a score of 80 percent or better.

Geometry, one credit

Geometry consists of studying the Holt Geometry textbook and passing all of the publisher's chapter tests with a score of 80 percent or better.

Biology, one credit

Biology consists of studying the Holt textbook "Living Things" and passing all of the unit tests with scores of 80 percent or better. In addition students are required to make thirty-seven illustrations showing the parts of assorted organs and their names. The dissection of frogs, fetal pigs, cows eyes, etc. is also a required laboratory part of this course.

Chemistry, one credit

Chemistry consists of studying all three books of the Globe Pathways in Science Chemistry series, passing all unit tests written by the High School staff with scores of 80 percent or better and doing assigned laboratory work described in the course manual.

Physics, one credit

Physics consists of studying all three books of the Globe Pathways in Science Physics series, passing all unit tests written by the High School staff with scores of 80 percent or better and doing assigned laboratory work described in the course manual.

U.S. Government, one-half credit

U.S. Government consists of studying materials prepared by the staff and passing the unit tests with scores of 80 percent or better. The course covers U.S. constitution, structure of the federal government and its functions.

APPENDIX A

Elections, state government and local government. The course also covers practical procedures in the event of arrest, your rights and how to get them recognized. How to get fair treatment through the courts. How to get legal help and how to work with a lawyer, family law, common laws and your responsibilities as a citizen.

U.S. History, one-half credit

U.S. History consists of studying staff prepared materials and passing the unit tests with scores of 80 percent or better. The materials cover, at first, an outline of events in U.S. History, then reviewing these events and stages in history in more detail and depth as appropriate. Some assignments in reading articles in encyclopedias are included.

World Geography, one-half credit

World Geography consists of studying staff prepared materials and passing unit test with scores of 80 percent or better. Materials include use of outline maps, cover characteristics of various locations both natural and political. Students must learn the names of nations, major cities; continents, oceans, major rivers, names of other natural features, poles, tropics and equator. Students learn to read and use longitude and latitude and rectangular survey systems. Course also covers map reading skills.

World History, one-half credit

World History consists of studying staff prepared materials and passing the unit tests with scores of 80 percent or better. The materials start with an outline of events and stages in world history beginning with prehistoric and geologic development and proceeds to the present time. The events and stages are then studies in more depth and detail.

Native Culture I and II, one credit each for a total of two credits

Native Culture consists of lectures, demonstrations and field trips covering Yupik language, Eskimo arts and crafts, Tundra survival, Eskimo stories, etc. The course is taught in the Yupik language and presentations are made by Eskimos who are specialists in assorted native skills and subject areas. Grades are on a pass/fail basis.

English I, II, III, IV, one credit each for a total of four credits

English consists of a wide range of individual and group activities designed to improve each student's ability to communicate by writing and speaking in English. The teacher first diagnoses problems individual students have with English communication and develops appropriate lessons, exercises and activities as indicated for students as individuals or groups as is deemed appropriate.

Typing, one credit

Typing consists of doing all lessons 1 through 150 in the textbook Century 21 Typing. Each lesson is graded on a pass/fail basis. Failed lessons must be redone. When the student passes all 150 lessons, credit is given.

Record Keeping, one credit

Record Keeping consists of studying all of the staff prepared materials and passing all of the unit tests with scores of 80 percent or better. Lessons cover bank accounts, personal record keeping, tax preparing, record keeping for businesses and use of forms and procedures for local business and government.

Physical Education, one credit

Physical Education consists of introducing students to the appropriate rules, skills and attitudes pertaining to basketball, volleyball, badminton, tennis, physical development and other activities as weather and available equipment permits.

Math Mastery, no credit--required for graduation

Every student is required each year to pass an extensive test with nearly 100 percent accuracy covering all kinds of basic arithmetic problems, algebra problems, trigonometry problems, geometry problems, etc. The program is diagnostic with students given intensive individual instruction in areas of deficiency.

Reading Mastery, no credit--required for graduation

Every student is required each year to develop their reading skills until they have mastered reading with understanding newsmagazines, newspapers, catalogs, directions, encyclopedias and college level textbooks.

Science Mastery, no credit--required for graduation

Every student is required each year to demonstrate mastery of the basic skills and knowledge of science. The program is diagnostic with intensive instruction given the student in areas of deficiency.

ELECTIVES**Home Economics, one credit**

Home Economics consists of studying staff prepared materials, passing unit tests with scores of 80 percent or better and doing assigned laboratory work. Course covers the basics of cooking, clothes and materials, use of household equipment, child care, budget preparation, family relations, etc.

Advanced Home Economics, one credit

This is an individual course and can be repeated for credit. The student works out a contract with the teacher to complete a project or series of projects in the area of home economics.

Advanced Typing, one credit

This course consists of doing each lesson in the textbook Century 21 Typing from lesson 150 through 300, as required in Typing (see Typing).

Welding, one credit

This course consists of passing all of the lessons in the Ken Cook program of Gas Welding and Electric Welding. This course involves the student in using a teaching machine and welding equipment. Students weld under the supervision of a welding instructor.

Power Mechanics, one credit

This course consists of passing all of the lessons in the Ken Cook small engines, diesel engines, marine engines, and generators course.

General Shop, one credit

This course consists of learning to use all of the hand tools and power tools available in the school shop. Students work under the supervision of the shop instructor who gives individual instruction to each student. Passing of both written and practical tests is required for each group of tools.

Electronics, one credit

Electronics consists of passing all of the lessons in the Health electronics course and doing the assigned laboratory work.

Photography, one credit

Photography consists of studying staff prepared materials and passing each lesson with nearly perfect scores. Extensive laboratory work using cameras and darkroom is required. Complete mastery of all camera and photolab procedures is required.

Advanced Shop, one credit

This course can be repeated for credit. This is an individualized course where the student enters a contract with the instructor to complete a project or series of projects using shop tools and equipment.

TANACROSS SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All students of Tanacross School have the rights granted them by our American form of government. They have the privilege of exercising these rights within the framework of our laws. Along with these rights are many responsibilities that rest on the shoulders of the individual. One should always remember that a right ceases to be that when it infringes on the rights of others. In other words, it is the responsibility of each individual to see that his expression of what he considers his right does not interfere with those who are around him. Too often some do not or are not able to recognize an infringement upon the rights of others so rules and regulations become necessary.

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL/TEACHER

The school principal is responsible for the school building and the program of studies carried on therein. All matters disciplinary in nature, all extra class activities, attendance, and bulletins are directed by the principal.

The educational program and rules and regulations are developed cooperatively by the Advisory School Board, teachers, and administration. The program must be consistent with Regional Board policy, however.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITY

Each teacher is responsible for his/her classroom with regard to general layout, decoration, interest centers, bulletin boards, etc. Staying in after school, extra writing exercises, retention of privileges, paddling, etc., are all within the school's normal procedure.

SAFETY

The safety of the children, while on the school grounds, is most important. Therefore, unsafe habits such as running in school, pushing, shoving, fighting, throwing things, etc. will not be tolerated. Each child is responsible for his/her own safety as well as the safety of others. Unsafe practices noticed by students should be reported to a teacher.

WITHDRAWAL

Students who plan to transfer to another school should notify the office where they will transfer so transcripts can be sent without delay. (A permission slip from parents will be required.)

ATTENDANCE

To be readmitted after an absence from school, the student must bring a written, signed note from his parent or guardian showing the date of absence and the reason for the absence. This note will be submitted to the teacher. Unexcused absences will be reflected in the grade.

COLD WEATHER POLICY

School will operate every day (except days not scheduled as school days) regardless of the temperature. At temperatures below -50° school will begin at 10:00 a.m. and be dismissed at 2:30 p.m. The principal will call a community member to pass the word for 10:00 a.m. opening.

GENERAL DISCIPLINE

The school is responsible for the student's safety and welfare in school and during school sponsored functions. Therefore, students are subject to school discipline during this time. It is expected that school students will conduct themselves as responsible citizens.

The following specific procedure will be used in all cases involving classroom disciplinary problems:

1. On the first occasion in which a student becomes a problem, the teachers will confer with that student.
2. In the event there is a problem a second time, he or she will be referred directly to the principal.
3. Continuation of the problem will result in a principal-student conference. The parents (or guardian) will be contacted.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMEvaluation of Student Achievement

A complete record of grades earned, activities, conduct, test results, and attendance is maintained in the school office. Each student has a permanent record card and a personal folder.

Report Cards and Grading System

Report cards will be issued every nine weeks. These cards should be shown to, discussed with, and signed by a parent or guardian. It is necessary to return these cards to the school because new grades will be added each nine weeks. At the end of the school year, you can keep the report card. Our grading system is as follows:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| A | Excellent Work |
| B | Good |
| C | Average |
| D | Poor |
| F | Failing |
| P | Passing |